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(ACIR), an independent agency that studied the relationship among local, State, and national levels of government. The Commission was terminated in 1996. The GPO/UNT partnership will assure ongoing access to ACIR reports and documents. GPO acted as agent for this agreement, matching the need for permanent access to the agency information with the willingness of UNT to enter into a partnership agreement.

In an action to further expand online access to Government information, GPO set a pilot project with OCLC and the National Library of Education to make Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) research documents available to depository libraries. The project makes the full text of these documents available only from workstations at depository libraries that currently subscribe to ERIC Research Reports on microfilm.

These types of partnership arrangements, along with other new initiatives, will be a significant part of the new GPO in the next millennium. GPO will continue its quest to expand the availability of free Government information to the American citizenry and fulfill the words of Thomas Jefferson, who said, “it is the responsibility of every American to be informed.”

Congressional Hearings On GPO In 1998

The House Subcommittee on Legislative Appropriations and the Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations

held their annual hearings on GPO’s funding request for FY 1999, in February and March 1998, respectively. GPO requested approximately \$110 million for its two appropriation accounts. One finances the printing and binding requirements of the Congress, while the other covers the costs of various programs administered by the Superintendent of Documents.

The Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation is critical to the maintenance and operation of GPO’s in-plant capacity, which is structured to serve Congress’ information product needs. The appropriation covers the costs of congressional printing such as the *Congressional Record*, bills, reports, hearings, documents, and other products. Each year, a substantial volume of this work is requisitioned. In FY 1998, more than 1.3 billion copy pages of congressional products were produced at an average cost of about 5 cents per page, inclusive of all prepress work, printing, binding, and delivery. This appropriation also covers database preparation work on congressional publications disseminated online via *GPO Access*.

The majority of the Superintendent of Documents Salaries and Expenses Appropriation is for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). While some of the funding for this program is for salaries and benefits, most is for printing and distributing publications (including publications in CD-ROM and online formats) to depository libraries. This appropriation also provides the majority of funding for the operation of *GPO Access*.

The Public Printer advised the appropriations subcommittees of GPO's continuing transition to a predominately electronic FDLP, as set forth in the 1996 *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*.

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In late February 1998, the Public Printer appeared before an oversight hearing of the GPO by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. The Public Printer provided Committee members information on a wide range of subjects, showing how GPO's programs reduce the need for duplicative production facilities throughout the Government, achieve significant taxpayer savings through a centrally-managed production and procurement system, and provide essential public access to Government information, which is increasingly needed by all Americans in the Information Age.

The Public Printer appeared before the Senate Rules and Administration Committee again in July to discuss his views on S. 2288, the Wendell H. Ford Government Publications Reform Act of 1998. However, the bill was not taken up by the Senate prior to adjournment.